

Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping Case and Its Impact

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National Institute of Standards and Technology



SWGAM (Fredericksburg, VA)

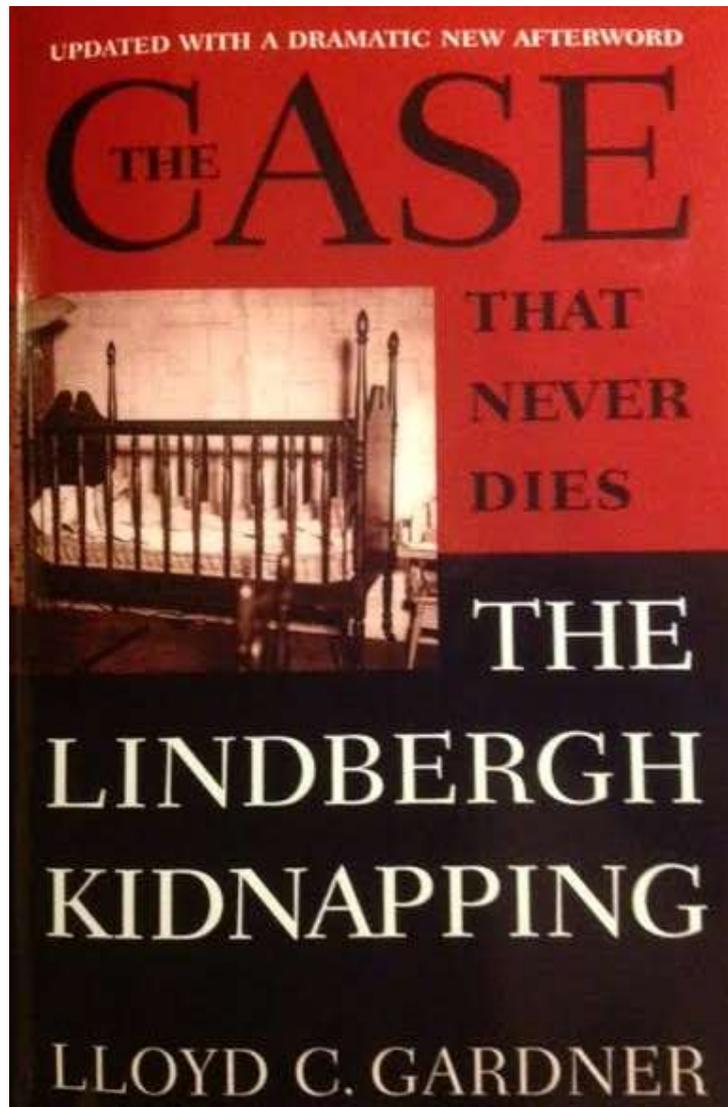
July 13, 2016



Part of a Longer Talk Given at NIST (June 10, 2016)



An Informative Book on the Topic



- Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr. (“Charlie” or “the Eaglet”) was born to aviators Charles Lindbergh and Anne Morrow Lindbergh on June 22, 1930
- He was kidnapped from his nursery crib in his second story room in Hopewell, New Jersey on March 1, 1932 – and **a ransom note is left**

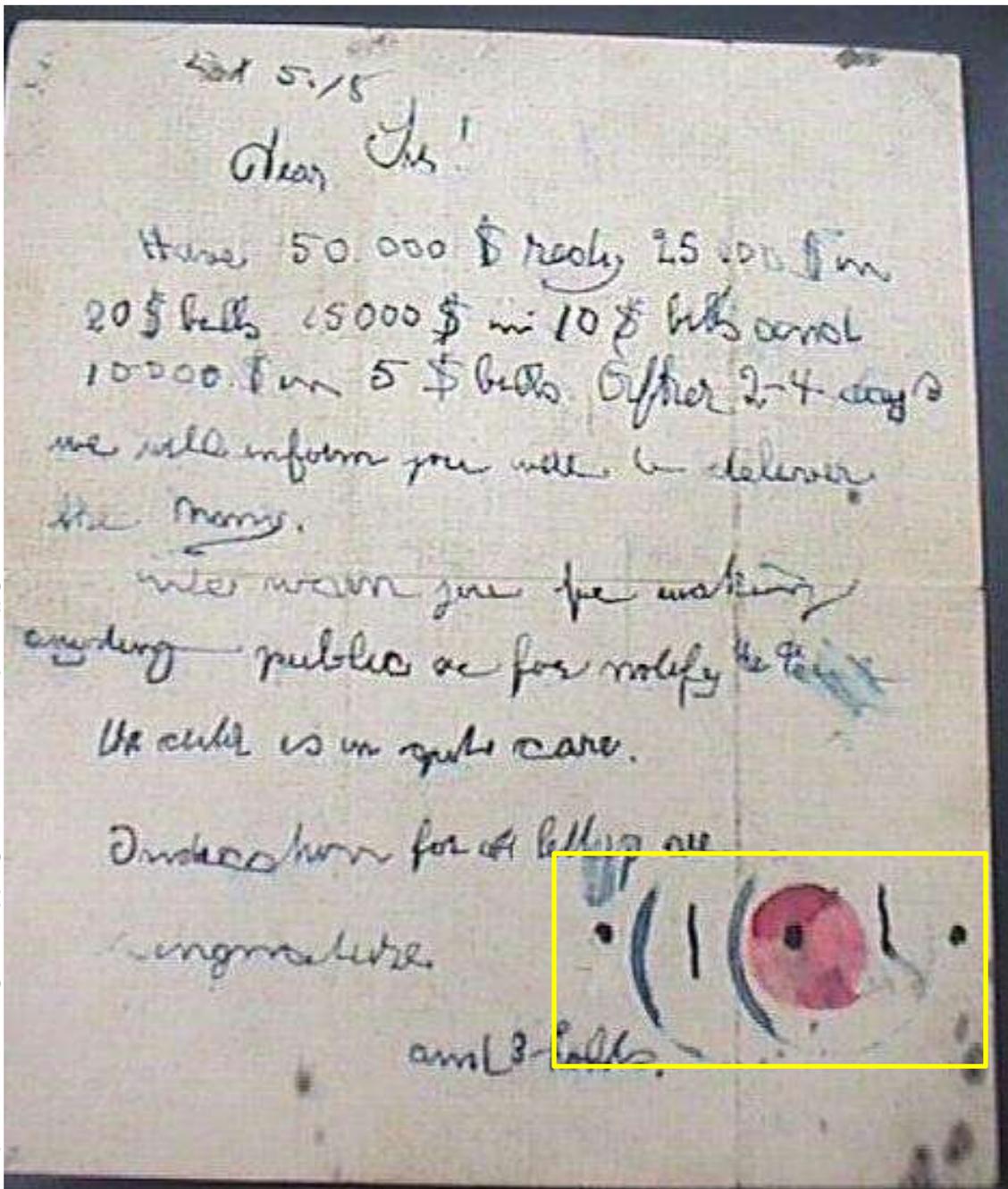
The Nursery Ransom Note

Dear Sir!

Have 50000\$ redy. 25000\$ in 20\$ bills 15000\$ in 10\$ bills and 10000\$ in 5\$ bills. After 2-4 days we will inform you were to deliver the mony.

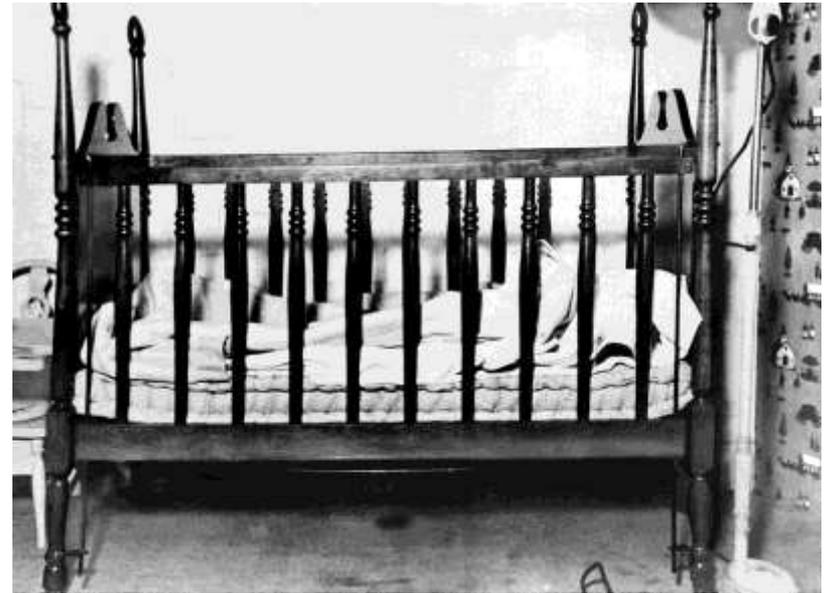
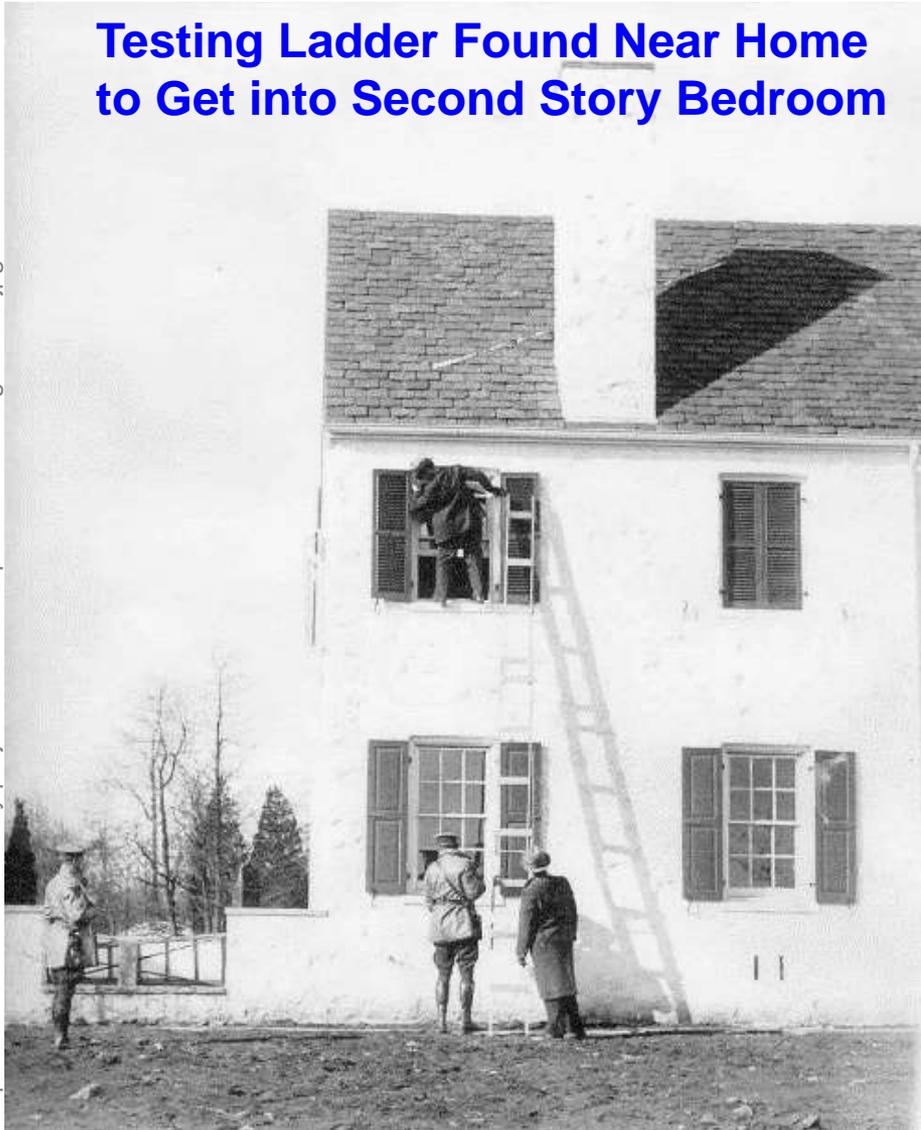
We warn you for making anyding public or for notify the police. the child is in gut care.

Indication for all letters are singnature and three holes.



The Crime Scene in Hopewell, NJ

Testing Ladder Found Near Home to Get into Second Story Bedroom



Empty Crib in Charlie's Nursery

Forensic Evidence Available

- **Handwriting**

- **Ransom note** was left at crime scene with a unique symbol on it
- An additional 12 ransom notes were received over the month following the crime
- Multiple handwriting experts would become involved yet no initial suspects had comparable handwriting

- **Wood analysis**

- **Ladder** left at scene
- Wood expert Arthur Koehler traced pieces of the ladder to a Bronx, NY lumberyard

Forensic Experts and Early Laboratories in the 1930s

- Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory established at Northwestern University in Chicago by Calvin Goddard in 1930
- FBI Laboratory established in November 1932
- New Jersey State Police (NJSP) Forensic Laboratory was established shortly after the Lindbergh case
- **Wilmer Souder** at the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) started casework with handwriting, typewriters, and firearms analysis (“ballistics”) in 1929 for primarily federal requests → performed over 800 cases from 80 agencies from 1929 to 1953
- **Several private experts** for handwriting and firearms analysis

Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

Ransom Notes

WANTED

INFORMATION AS TO THE
WHEREABOUTS OF



CHAS. A. LINDBERGH, JR.

OF HOPEWELL, N. J.

SON OF COL. CHAS. A. LINDBERGH

World-Famous Aviator

This child was kidnaped from his home
in Hopewell, N. J., between 8 and 10 p. m.
on Tuesday, March 1, 1932.

DESCRIPTION:

Age, 20 months	Hair, blond, curly
Weight, 27 to 30 lbs.	Eyes, dark blue
Height, 29 inches	Complexion, light
Deep dimple in center of chin	
Dressed in one-piece coverall night suit	

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO

COL. H. N. SCHWARZKOPF, TRENTON, N. J., or
COL. CHAS. A. LINDBERGH, HOPEWELL, N. J.

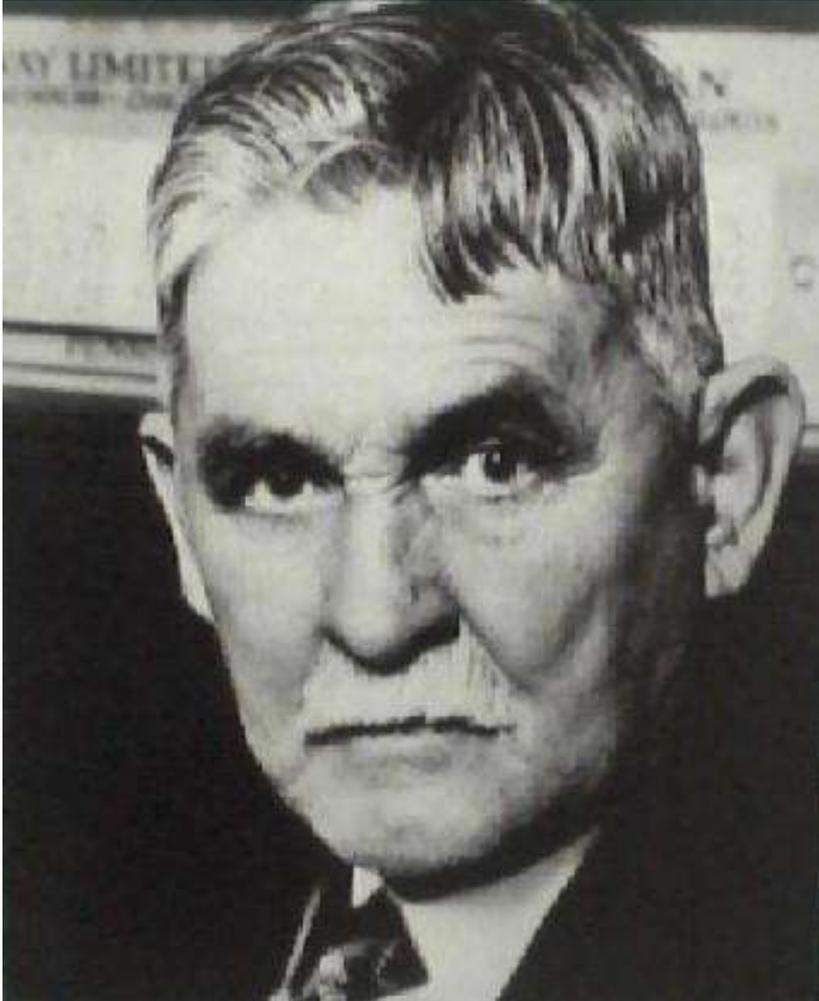
ALL COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE TREATED IN CONFIDENCE

COL. H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF
Supt. New Jersey State Police, Trenton, N. J.

March 11, 1932

- More than a dozen ransom notes were sent to Charles Lindbergh with demands for \$50,000
- Money (in marked bills) was paid on April 2, 1932 through an intermediary **John F. Condon** (“Jafsie”)

John F. Condon a.k.a. "Jafsie"



- A retired school principal in Bronx, New York who served as a “go-between” intermediary with the kidnapper(s) and Charles Lindbergh
- Became involved starting March 10, 1932 with the fourth ransom note

Search for the Kidnapper Intensifies...

Baby's remains were discovered in the woods near Lindbergh's home on May 12, 1932

A foot deformity along with clothing fragments helped with identification of the remains, which were cremated soon after discovery



\$25,000 REWARD

For information resulting in the apprehension and conviction of the kidnapers of
CHARLES A. LINDBERGH, JR.

*cross the street and
walk to the next corner
and follow White Horse Ave
to the road*

*take the money with
you - come alone
and walk
I will meet you*

*The boy is on Boat Nelly
It is a small Boat 28 feet
long. two person are on the
Boat they are innocent.
you will find the boat between
Horseneck Beach and Jay Head
near Elizabeth Island.*

Please report all handwriting similar to above, with samples of same, if possible, to
COL. H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF
Superintendent, New Jersey State Police, TRENTON, N. J.

Power Struggle during the Investigation



Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf
(Superintendent, New Jersey State Police)



Director J. Edgar Hoover
(Bureau of Identification, later FBI)

1988

National Bureau of Standards (NBS → NIST) Was Asked to Help in the Lindbergh Case

Dr. Wilmer Souder, an NBS physicist, examined the ransom notes on April 1, 1932 at Lindbergh's home and invited NJSP to NBS to photograph them for study

Dr. Souder in his NBS Identification Laboratory in April 1935 (shortly after he testified in the Lindbergh case)



Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

1932 — Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr. born June 22, 1930

- ← Kidnapping (March 1)
- ← Ransom Paid (April 2)
- ← Body Found (May 12)

May 9-14, 1932
Lieut. R. A. Snook at NBS

1933

- Examination and photography of notes
- Fabrication of alphabet key

1934

- Coded as Adamson Case/T-67196

← Hauptmann Arrest (Sept 19)

1935

- ← Trial Begins (Jan 2)
- ← Trial Ends (Feb 14)

Hauptmann executed April 3, 1936



A New Jersey State Police (NJSP) Memo

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

SPECIAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

STATION..... TROOP Headquarters..... DATE May 17th..... 1932.....

REPORT OF Lieut. R. A. Snook.....

ACCOMPANIED BY Alone.....

SUBJECT: Report of contact with the U.S. Bureau of Standards, Dept., of
Commerce for the purpose of examining and photographing certain
documents in connection with the Lindbergh case.

May 17, 1932

Report of Lieut. R.A. Snook

“Report of contact with the U.S. Bureau of Standards, Dept. of Commerce for the purpose of examining and photographing certain documents **in connection with the Lindbergh case.**”

1. On May 7, 1932 Lieut. R. A. Snook received instructions from Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Superintendent, New Jersey State Police to proceed to Washington, D. C., and meet Dr. Wilmer Souder at the U. S. Bureau of Standards, Department of Commerce at 9:00 a.m., on May 9th. Lieut. Snook was advised that arrangements had been made by telephone with the U. S. Bureau of Standards to have certain work done in connection with the original ransom notes in the Lindbergh case. Lieut. Snook had in his possession the following: 14 original ransom notes, 12 envelopes one of which contained no address, a brown wrapper containing an address; and 6 envelopes containing miscellaneous letters which were marked by Lt. Snook from 2 to 7 incl.

Lt. Snook proceeded to Washington, D. C., as directed and met Dr. Souder at the Bureau of Standards at 9:00 a.m., on the morning of May 9th. I explained to Dr. Souder my mission, showed him the documents which I had in my possession.

Dr. Souder explained that arrangements had been made for the work to be kept strictly confidential. A secret number T-87194 had been assigned to the case which was to be known to the Bureau of Standards as the Adamson case a bank failure involving the interests of the U. S. Government. I was introduced and referred to at the Bureau as Mr. Martin from New York.

“A secret [test] number ... was assigned to the [Lindbergh] case, which was to be known to the Bureau of Standards as the Adamson case...”

Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr. born June 22, 1930

1932

← Kidnapping (March 1)

← Ransom Paid (April 2)

← Body Found (May 12)

Souder examines ransom letters in Hopewell, NJ (April 1)

Photographs of ransom letters taken in Washington DC at National Bureau of Standards (May 9)

● Documents discovered regarding Souder's examination of handwriting

1933

←

←

8,000 to 10,000 documents examined by Wilmer Souder (NBS)

1934

←

←

← Hauptmann Arrest (Sept 19)

1935

← Trial Begins (Jan 2)

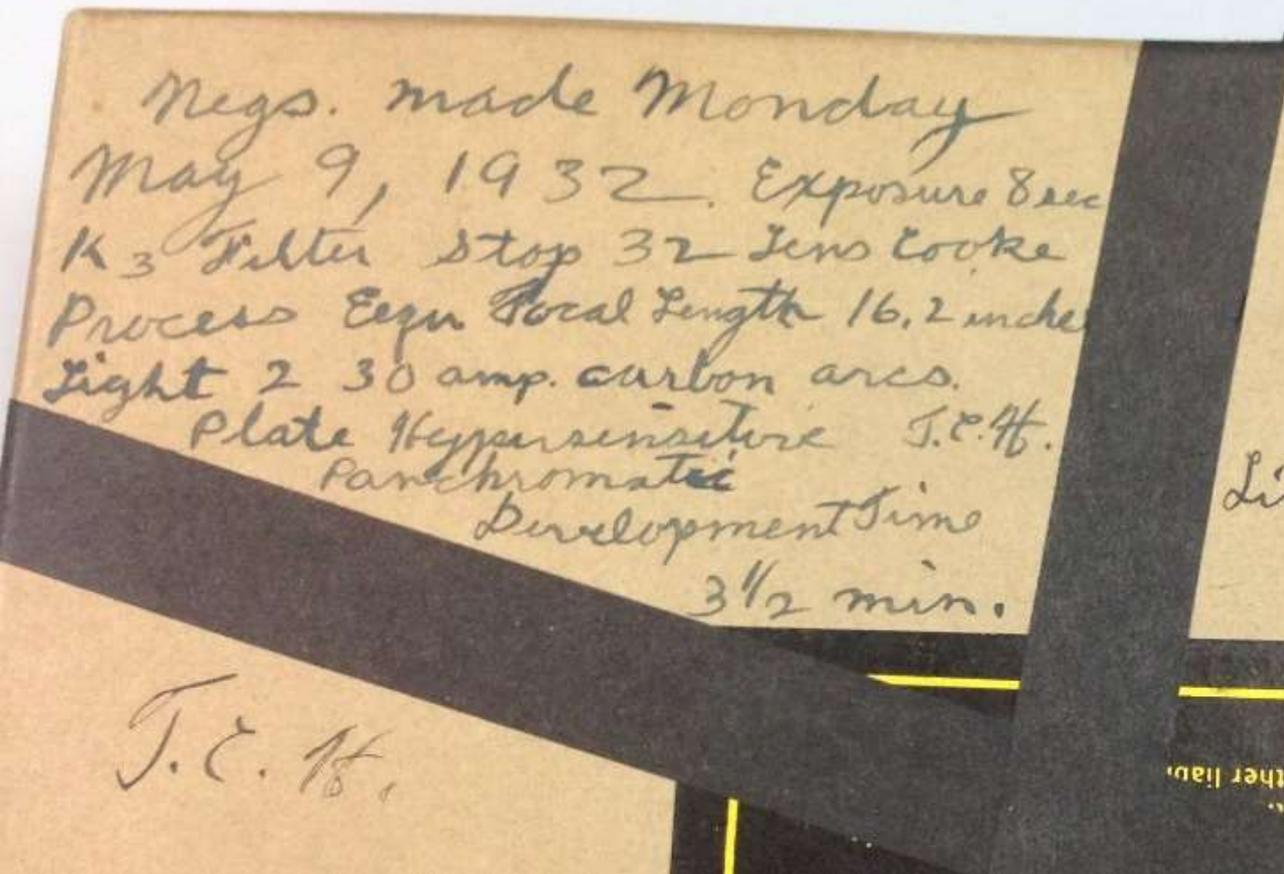
← Trial Ends (Feb 14)

Souder testifies (Jan 16)

Hauptmann executed April 3, 1936



Box of
Ransom Note
Photographic
Negatives Found
November 24, 2015



Baby
Lindberg Kidnapping
Case

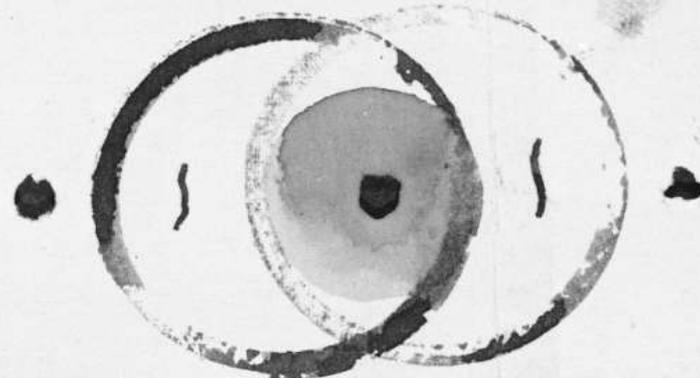
Notice: The plates in this package have
they will be replaced if found to be defective.
sold without warranty, guarantee or other liability.

A Lindbergh Ransom Note Photo Taken at NBS on May 9, 1932 for the "Adamson" Investigation

... find a noise in
center of the porch underneath a stone
this noise will tell
you where to find us.

act accordingly.

after $\frac{3}{4}$ of a hour be
on the place. bring the money with you.



N.J. State
T67196-5-9-32

NBS Test # T67196

Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WASHINGTON

*with Lindbergh's
report.*

ADDRESS REPLY TO
BUREAU OF STANDARDS

WS:EGH

May 14, 1932

IN YOUR REPLY
REFER TO FILE NO.

II-6/TW 67196

**Division II-6
Test # 67196**

New Jersey State Police,
(Attn: Col. Norman Schwarzkopf),
Trenton, New Jersey

Subject: Handwriting

Gentlemen:

The documents submitted by your Lieutenant Russel A. Snook, #154, on May 9 as arranged by your telephoned message of May 5 to our Dr. Wilmer Souder have been carefully compared and photographed.

It is the opinion of Dr. Souder who examined these documents, in your presence, on April 1, and again during this week that they were all written by the same individual.

May 14, 1932 NBS Letter to NJSP (continued)

The master negatives and photostats of all prints accompanying this report were sealed by your agent and are deposited in the Standards vault of this Bureau. Two sets of complete prints are likewise sealed and deposited in the vault. These are available upon your order for further sets of prints or for delivery, sealed, to a properly identified agent.

This Bureau offers your organization the fullest cooperation of its facilities in any future developments in this case.

Respectfully,

G. K. Burgess

George K. Burgess, Director

Hw/B

Inclosure

Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

BUREAU OF STANDARDS

WS:HER

June 3, 1932

IN YOUR REPLY
REFER TO FILE NO.

II-6/TW 67196

New Jersey State Police,
(Attn: Col. Norman Schwarzkopf),
Trenton, New Jersey

Senator Morrow was
Charles Lindbergh's
father-in-law

Subject: Handwriting

Gentlemen:

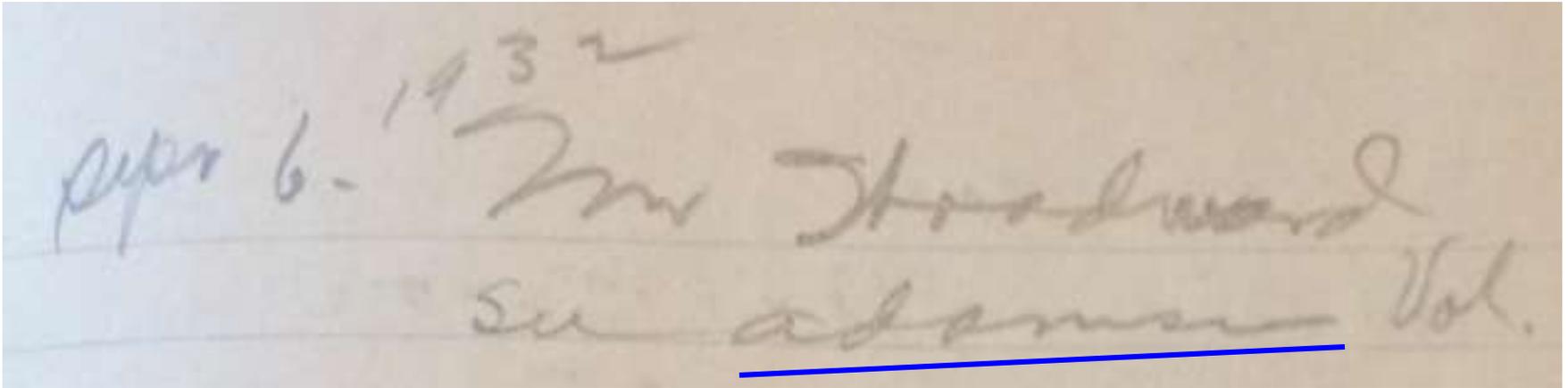
Upon request of Mr. George R. Dye, secretary to the late Senator Morrow, this Bureau has examined the handwritings appearing on approximately 8,000 documents filed in the Senate Office Building.

No agreement was found for any specimen with the specimens formerly inspected in our Test No. Tw 67196.

Respectfully,

G. K. Burgess
George K. Burgess, Director

There is an additional Souder notebook
that we currently do not have...



*Transcription of Souder's Handwriting from an entry in
his Vol. 1 Identification of Documents 1929-1933:*

Sept. 6, 1932

[submission from] **Mr. Woodward**

See Adamson Vol. [notebook volume]

Lindbergh Case 1932-1935

Room 3110 Internal Revenue Bldg.,
Washington, D. C.,
July 12, 1933.

Mr. Frank J. Wilson,
Taft Hotel,
New York, New York.

Dear Frank:

Dr. Souder reports that after examining and studying the handwriting of Morris M. Schechtman in the books of the Max Schling Seedsman Company and other documents, he is convinced that Schechtman did not write the Lindbergh notes or the "Deposit Slip".

I sent to you yesterday under separate cover the two books of the Max Schling Seedsman Company.

Dr. Souder has also given me the eleven pages on which appear the samples of the handwriting of Carl O. Giessler. These I will keep in the files here, unless you want them in New York.

Sincerely,

F. M. Woodward,
Special Agent

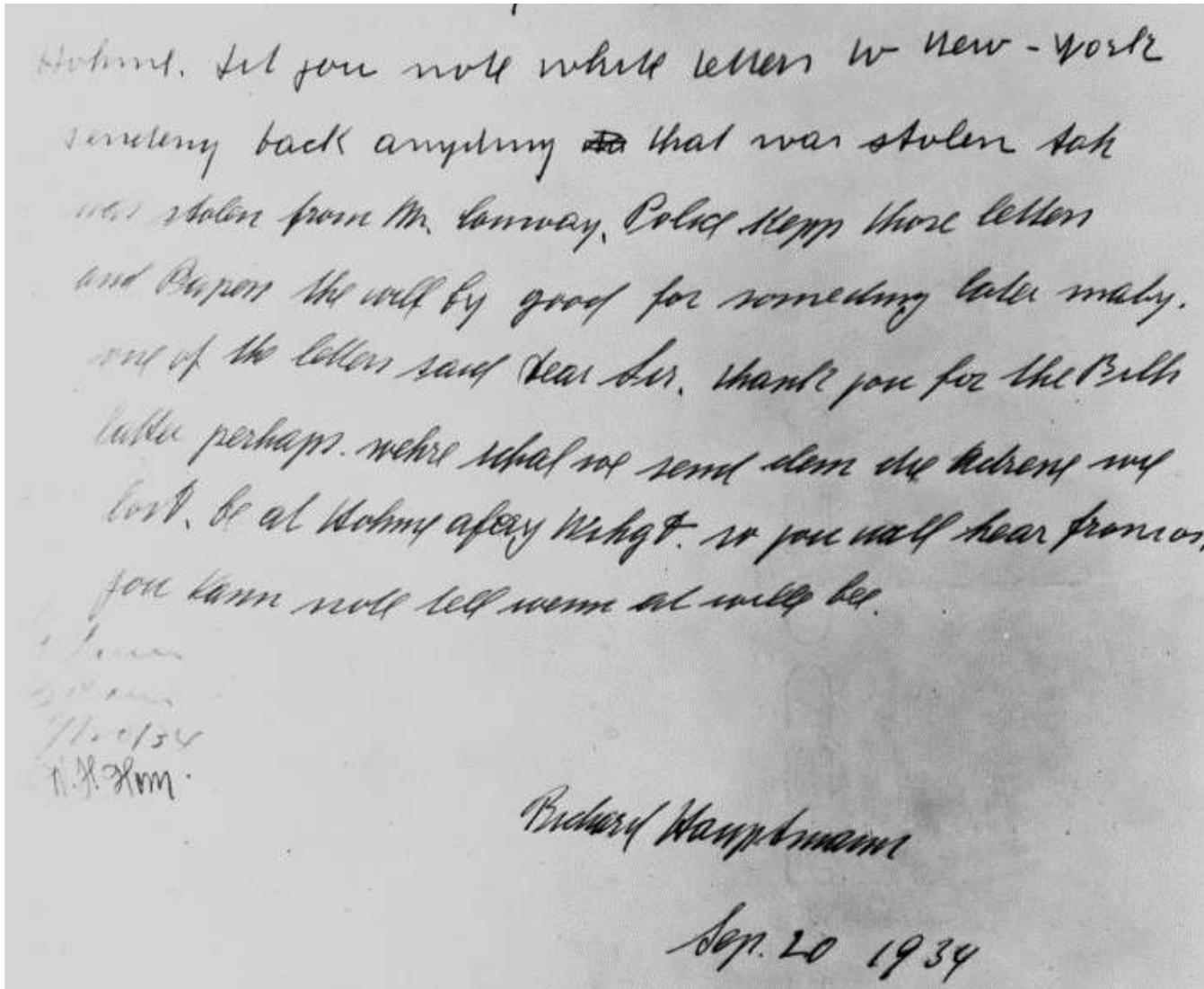
Bruno Richard Hauptmann Arrested



<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/Hauptmann/hauptmannletter.html>

- In September 1934, a gas station attendant received a marked Lindbergh bill (\$10 gold certificate) and wrote the car license plate number on the back
- Bruno Richard Hauptmann, a German immigrant, was arrested and \$13,760 of marked bills were found in his garage

Hauptmann's First Exemplar Letter



Hohent. Ich bin nicht selbst in New-York
sendend back anything ~~to~~ that was stolen take
was stolen from Mr. Lammy, Police Hauptmann those letters
and Papers the will by good for something letter mostly.
one of the letters said Dear Sir, thank you for the letter
letter perhaps. we're what we send down the letter and
lost. be at Hohent a few weeks. so you will hear from us.
you kann will tell wenn at will be.

Richard Hauptmann
Sep. 20 1934

1. Lammy
2. Hauptmann
7/10/34
N.Y. Am.

Hauptmann was asked to write almost a dozen exemplar letters so that his handwriting could be compared to the ransom notes

This one (found in the National Archives NBS records) was written the day after he was arrested

Courthouse in Flemington, NJ

Trial Held: January 2 to February 14, 1935



The Trial was a Bit of a Circus

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/Hauptmann/courtroom.jpg>

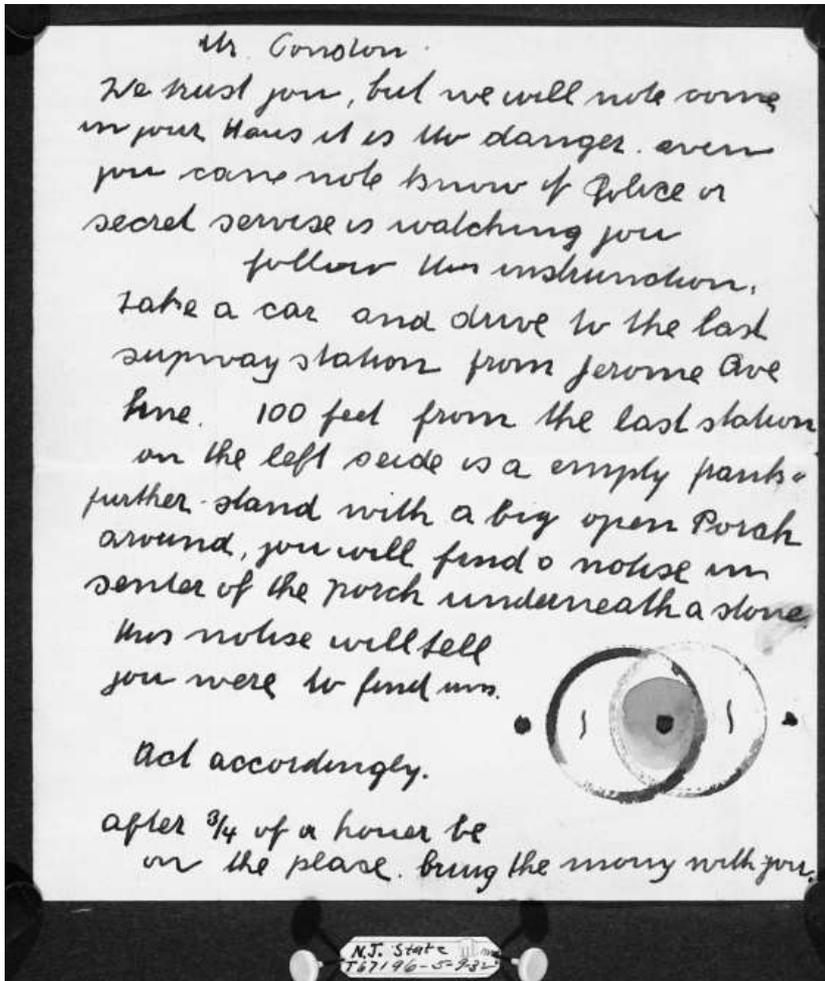


Lindbergh Case Handwriting Comparisons

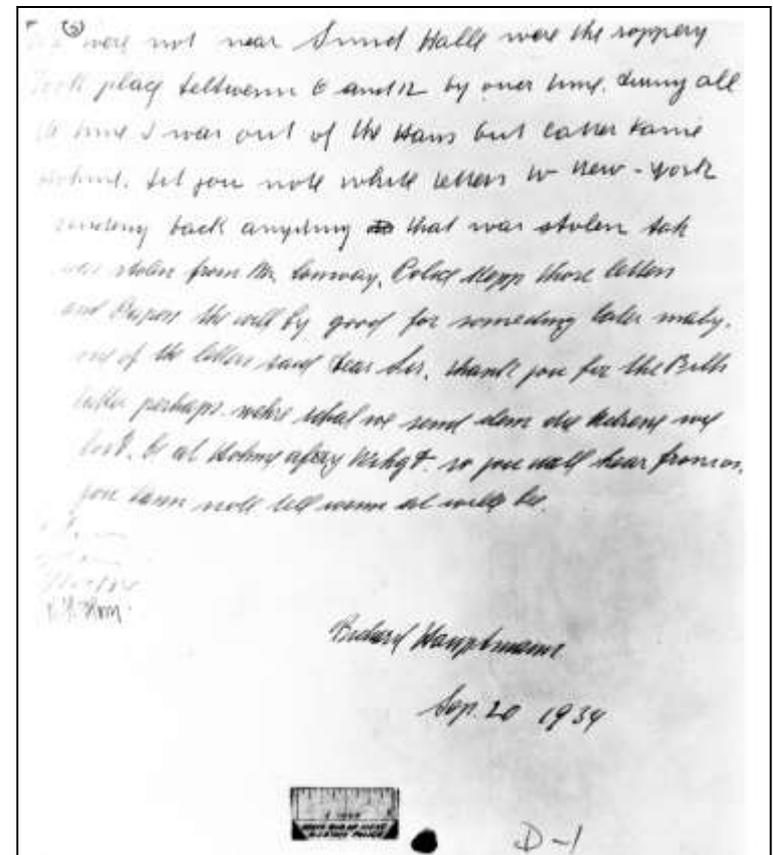
One of the ransom notes

Exemplar letter written by Bruno Richard Hauptmann shortly after his arrest

Photo from NBS records held by NARA

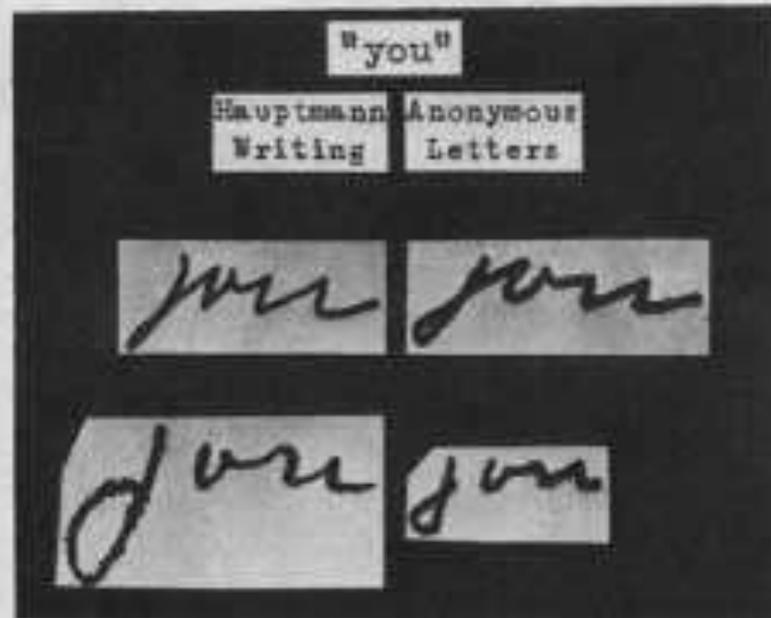


Question (Q) Specimen



Known (K) Specimen

Handwriting Exhibits for Court



Small
Sellers - Los Angeles

From the FBI.gov Website



Famous Cases & Criminals

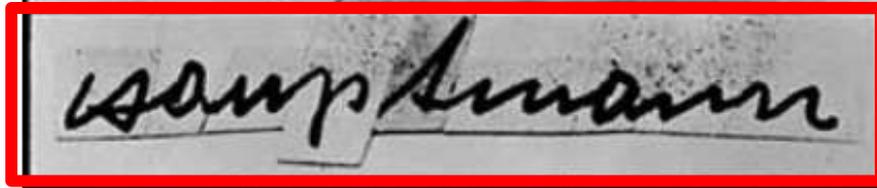
[Home](#) • [About Us](#) • [History](#) • [Famous Cases & Criminals](#) • [The Lindbergh Kidnapping](#) • [Image](#) • [Known Signature of Hauptm](#)

Known Signature of Hauptmann (top) Compared to Ransom Note Lettering

A comparison of the writing appearing on the ransom notes with Hauptmann's signature disclosed remarkable similarities in inconspicuous, personal characteristics and writing habits, which resulted in a positive identification by the handwriting experts of the Laboratory.



Hauptmann signature



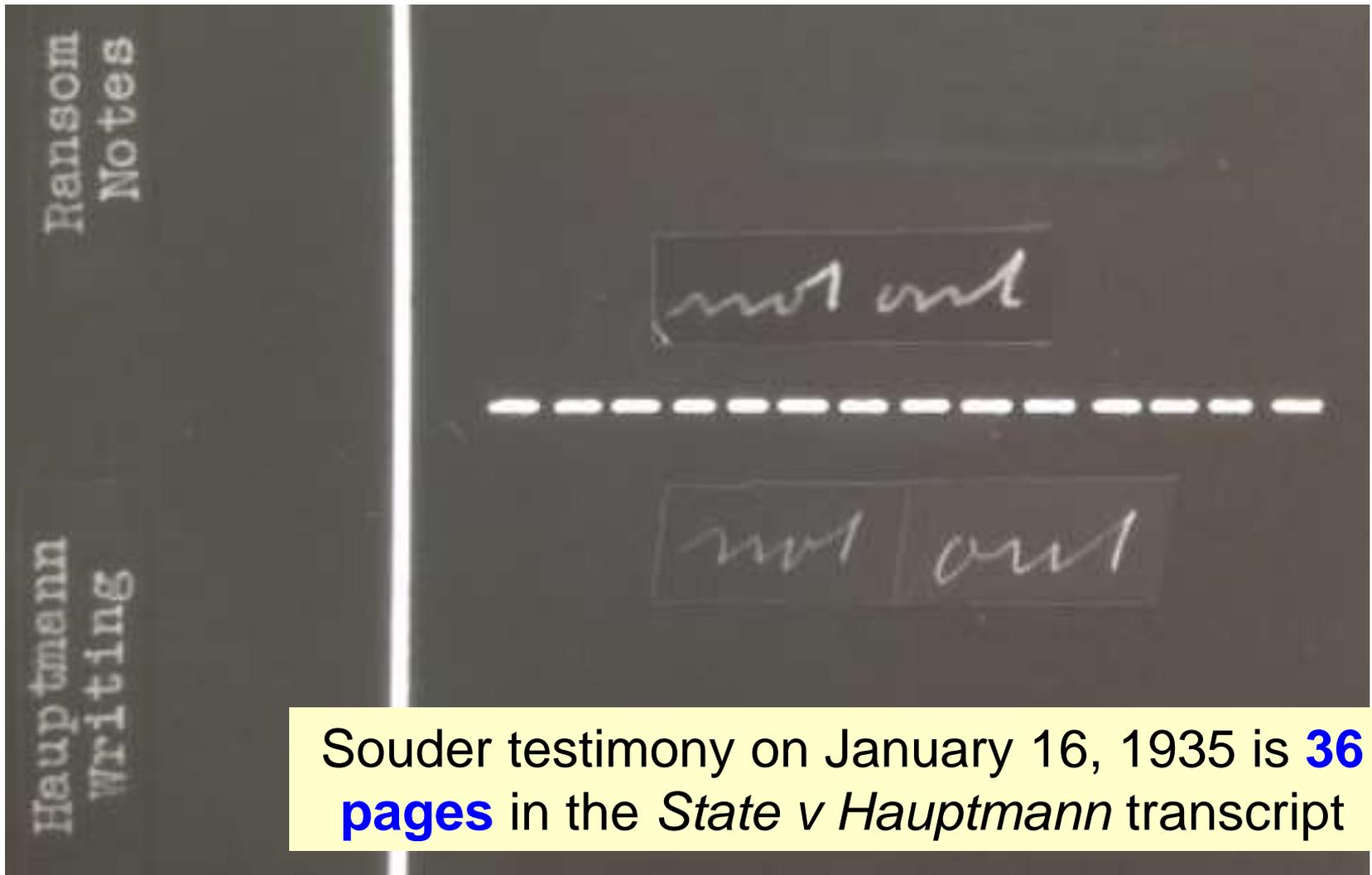
Individual letters from ransom notes

 [Click to view full-size image...](#) — Size: 50.7 kB



Handwriting expert Clark Sellers (from Los Angeles) showing his court exhibit

Evidence that Souder Discussed in the Hauptmann Trial



Numbers indicate order of court testimony given



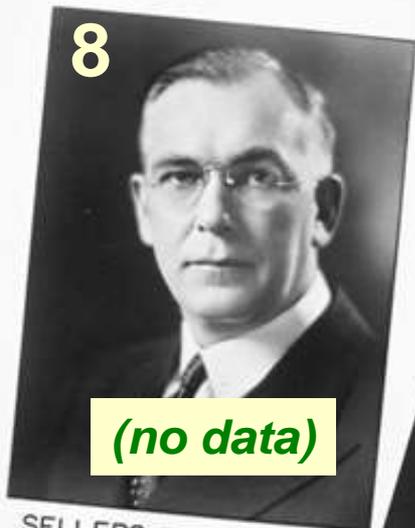
\$12,000

OSBORN, N.Y.C.



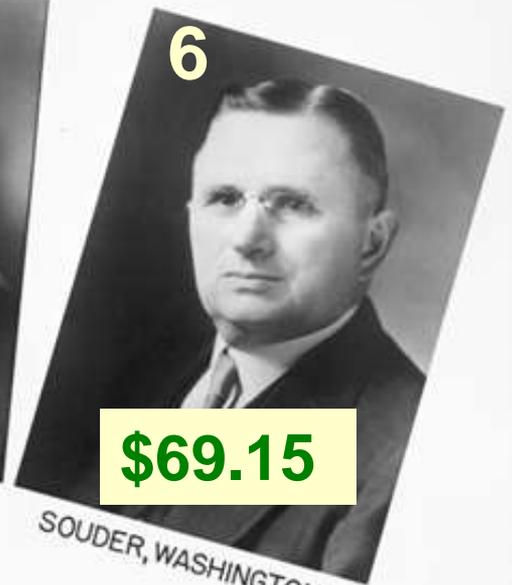
\$3,536

CASSIDY, RICHMOND



(no data)

SELLERS, LOS ANGELES



\$69.15

SOUDER, WASHINGTON

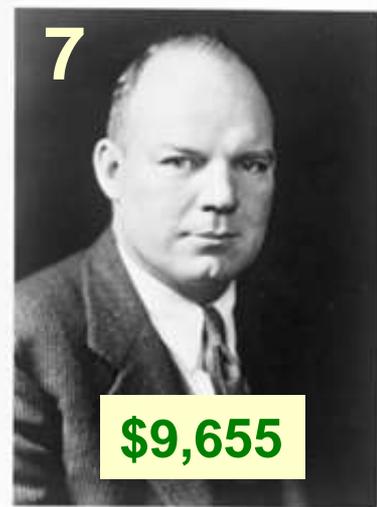
HANDWRITING EXPERTS
STATE OF NEW JERSEY vs HAUPTMANN
JANUARY 1935

Expense fees (per NY Times article on 3/14/1935)



\$3,507

TYRRELL, MILWAUKEE



\$9,655

OSBORN, JR., N.Y.C.



\$4,856

WALTER, CHICAGO



\$4,800

STEIN, N.Y.C.

Charles Lindbergh Testifying at the Trial



Lindbergh testifying, Wikimedia Commons

Ladder Analysis



Ladder wood was said to have matched corresponding features in boards coming from Bruno Hauptmann's attic in his Bronx home

Ladder Being Brought into the Court (Feb 9, 1935)



In Court, the Ladder Is Compared to Hauptmann Attic Wood Pieces

Taken from the attic of the Hauptmann home in the Bronx. Mr. Koehler is pointing to the nail hole which is identical, according to the prosecution, in both pieces of wood.

Arthur Koehler, wood technologist of the United States Forest Products Laboratory (Madison, WI)



Frederick Pope, part of Hauptmann's defense team

FBI Laboratory and Wilmer Souder 1934

1932

— Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr. born June 22, 1930

- ← Kidnapping (March 1)
- ← Ransom Paid (April 2)
- ← Body Found (May 12)

Jan 15, 1934 letter from
Assistant Atty. Gen. to NBS Director,
Courtesy of John Fox, FBI Historian

1933

- ← FBI Lab
(Nov 24)

Dear Dr. Briggs:-

The Director of the Division of Investigation of this Department, Mr. John Edgar Hoover, is desirous of securing the advice and assistance of Dr. Wilmer Souder, an expert of the Bureau of Standards, in connection with the development of a technical laboratory in the Division of Investigation for the study of ballistics, handwriting, typewriting, photography, and fingerprint identification work.

1934

Souder
advisor to
FBI laboratory

Wilmer Souder

Suggested equipment and
arrangement of laboratory

- ← Hauptmann Arrest (Sept 19)

1935

- ← Trial Begins (Jan 2)
- ← Trial Ends (Feb 14)

Reviewed lab findings

Provided training for agents

Hauptmann executed April 3, 1936

Invited Guests to NIST Colloquium on Wilmer Souder (June 10, 2016)

*They helped with resource
materials on Wilmer Souder*

John Fox
(FBI Historian)

Kathy Leser
(Souder's granddaughter)

Kathleen Storer
(USSS QD Examiner)



Photo credit: Rich Press (NIST)

Patricia Manzolillo
(USPS Lab Director)

Edward Appel
(Retired FBI Agent;
Charles Appel's son)

Jason Long
(ATF Lab Librarian)

Souder NIST Museum Exhibit Opened June 10, 2016





Photo credit: Rich Press (NIST)

Part of a Current NIST Museum Exhibit on Souder Highlights His Work in the Lindbergh Case

